

THE
Rev. Mr. O'LEARY'S
ADDRESS

TO
The COMMON PEOPLE of IRELAND;

PARTICULARLY,

To such of them as are called WHITEBOYS,

Revised and corrected by HIMSELF.

D U B L I N:

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REV. MR. O'LEARY'S

A D D R E S S

THE COMMONS PEOPLE OF IRELAND

BY WILLIAM WHITEBOY

AND JOHN W. WHELAN

DUBLIN

PRINTED BY P. COOKE
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NO. 10, FARRINGTON STREET.

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T O

The COMMON PEOPLE OF IRELAND;

PARTICULARLY,

To such of them as are called WHITEBOYS.

Brethren and Countrymen,

I ADDRESSED you before, in time of open war, when the enemies of your king and country were within view of our coasts. Your peaceable conduct at that critical time, answered the expectations of your instructors, and procured you the countenance and approbation of your rulers. The defenceless cottager was protected by the honesty of his neighbour. Order and tranquillity reigned all over the land. Each

~~member of the community was secure in his re-~~
 spective rights and property. And whilst the
 plains of America were dyed with blood, and
 England was convulsed by the insurrections of
 the lower classes, who were either cut off by the
 army, or atoned on the gallows for the violati-
 on of the laws, you felt the happy effects of a
 quiet and orderly conduct.

Nature and religion, my brethren, recom-
 mend this peaceable and orderly conduct to
 man. To a peaceable and orderly conduct,
 nature annexes our happiness, and religion en-
 joins it as a duty. We are born with inclina-
 tions for order and peace, and we have the hap-
 piness to live under the wise laws of a gospel,
 whose counsels and precepts, whose threats and
 promises, inspire the union of the hearts, and to
 do to others as we would wish to be done by.

Whence then those disturbances which of late
 have been occasioned by some of you in the dio-
 cese of Cloyne, and which now begin to reach to
 the diocese of Cork? You will tell me, that
 your grievances are the cause. I doubt it not,
 my brethren; but still, under our grievances, are
 we to forget that we are Christians? Under our
 grievances, are we to forget that the Providence
 of

of God has made an unequal distribution of the goods of this life, reserving a perfect equality for the next? Under our grievances, are we to forget that when our distresses are not the effects of our crimes, or imprudence, resignation to the will of Heaven becomes an indispensable duty? Are we to forget that the way of the cross is the road to the crown; and that altho' religion does not condemn these distinctions of rank, fortune, and authority, established by Providence, for the subordination of subjects, and the tranquillity of states, yet there are more promises made in the scriptures, in favour of those who suffer, than in favour of those who live in ease and opulence. And although the gates of salvation are open to the rich who make good use of their wealth, as they are to the poor who suffer with patience, yet the scriptures declare, that they are narrower for the former than for the latter. In this life there must be grievances which no human wisdom can redress. The inconveniencies arising from them are counterbalanced by the expectation of a better, promised by the Divine Author of our religion, who has set us the example of patience and suffering. The soldier, led on by his general, encounters death with intrepidity, in hopes of victory, which soon after vanishes as smoke.

Amoak. And shall a Christian, called to an immortal crown, refuse to follow his king, who rears up the banners of the cross, and cries out, take up your cross and follow me in the paths to eternal life. To a worldling plunged in the luxuries of life, such an address will appear insipid: But on you who are not lost to the feelings of religion, it will have a different effect. Perhaps when he comes to that part of it in which mention is made of crosses and sufferings, he will lay it aside, and say, Mr. O'Leary should write to those people in another stile, and threaten them with curses, excommunications, halters and gibbets. No, my brethren, curses and excommunications lose their effect, when lavished with too much profusion. Truth must not be made odious by the harsh manner in which it is conveyed. The nature of man is such, that he is gained upon by example and sweetness more than by rudeness and severity. He is apt to hate the hand that is raised up to strike him, though it is for his correction; but he loves the hand that is stretched out to cure him. Sweetness, tenderness, charity, should form the principal character of a clergyman, and become the predominant spirit of his functions. They were not lions, but lambs, which our Saviour sent to preach his gospel. It is to their

their patience, their mildness, their prayers and sufferings that we are indebted for the conversion of the world, and the propagation of our ministry. And I should be very sorry that you should derive no benefit from my instructions but a string of curses, which perhaps you would get by heart from no other view than to vent them upon your children in a fit of anger or resentment. As to halters and gibbets, the best way to restrain the hand, is to change the heart, which when regulated by the gospel law, will sacrifice the hand sooner than give offence.

However, my brethren, it is not in the nature of man to suffer under grievances which he can lawfully remove. It is when the remedy fails, or cannot be lawfully had, that patience becomes our only and most salutary resource; and I appeal to such of you as have been guilty of any outrages, whether the steps you have taken to redress your grievances be either conformable to the laws of God or nature, or whether they can ever answer any other purpose than that of drawing on yourselves the vengeance of the law. Is it an effectual mode of redressing grievances, to crop the ears of your neighbour's horse, or to destroy a rick of corn; the only resource of a poor industrious farmer
who

who has no other means to pay his rent, and who is thrust into prison by a merciless landlord, will be for entire years, perhaps for life, viewing, on the walls of a gloomy prison, the cruel marks of your barbarity. Whence arose the savage custom of houghing the most harmless and useful of animals, the horse, and the cow? We read of nations not enlightened by the christian religion, yet figure to themselves a Supreme Being, the fountain of tenderness and mercy. These people think it a sin to deprive any creature of that life which the Supreme Being has given it, and consequently never eat fish or flesh. To guard against the love of pleasure, and to check the desires which may arise from the sight of any object, some of them pluck out their eyes, alledging, that if they had shut two doors against their passions, they have opened a thousand doors to wisdom, by qualifying themselves for the undistracted contemplation of Heavenly things. The gospel does not require such severity from you. But I appeal to you, if these Pagans will not rise up in judgment against Christians, who are guilty of acts of cruelty? What, my brethren, have you forgot the commandments of God, who takes your neighbours ox and horse, under his protection? for when he forbids us to covet them, he commands us not to injure them.

You

You will tell me, that if you have cropped two or three horses, and burned some ricks of corn, the injury has been done only to parish proctors, these leeches whom you consider as your greatest oppressors, who every season do you infinitely more harm. But this is a weak plea in the eyes of God, who commands us to love our enemies, and to do good to those who do us harm. Who, after securing man's life and reputation by the fifth commandment, which says, thou shalt not kill: and his honour and domestic tranquillity, by the sixth, which says, thou shalt not commit adultery; becomes himself the watchful guardian of his temporal substance, by the seventh, which says, thou shalt not steal; and stifles in the heart every desire of fraud and injustice, by the ninth. The commandment being general extends to all. Hence he screens the poor from the oppression of the rich. Forbids the poor under pretence of poverty, to waste or plunder the property of the rich, and establishes the general and permanent peace of society on the love of our enemies; and that maxim of the law of nature, not to do to others what we would not wish to be done to us; much less will the quality of a proctor excuse you in eyes of the law, which punishes the crime without any regard to the quality of the injurer or injured.

I am happy to find that these disturbances have ceased after a very short duration, and though mightily magnified at a distance, have been confined but to a few parishes in the dioceses of Cloyne and Cork, and that a few misguided persons have been concerned in them. But I am sorry that you have adopted a new plan, which, however moderate, and though certainly founded on your poverty on one hand, and the oppressive manner of collecting the tythes on the other, is very improper, and may prove of the most fatal consequence to yourselves. The following caution, which however it may involve yourselves in trouble, if carried into execution, yet will convince the kingdom, that the few breaches of the peace which happened in this country, have not originated in a spirit of rebellion, as has been infidiously and scandalously insinuated. The following caution, I say, has been, within those few days, affixed to the gates of parish churches and chapels:

C. O. P. Y.

“You are hereby cautioned not to pay ministers tythes, only in the following manner, viz. potatoes 4s. per acre, wheat and barley, 1s. 6d. per acre,

acre, oats and meadows, 1s. per acre.—Roman Catholic clergy to receive for marriages, 5s. for baptism, 1s. 6d. for anointing and visitation of the sick, 1s. for mass, 1s. for confession, 6d. you are hereby warned not to pay clerk money,* nor any other dues concerning marriages; be all sure not to go to any expences at your confession turns, but let them partake of your own fare.†

It is needless to remind you of what the Dublin Shop-keeper † has already informed you of, that posting up notices is a misdemeanor punishable by law, and that your imprudence may hurry you unwarily into several breaches of the clause of the White-boy Act; that decree death against offences, which perhaps to you may not seem of such importance. You may in like manner be led into the snare by imagining that this act is not in force. It is in full force until the first of June in the year seventeen hundred and eighty-seven. Many and severe are the clauses of that act, and tho' an English writer says, that they are better calculated for the meridian of Barbary, than for a christian country, ‡

* These clerks are such as attend on Priests.

† The signature to a letter published on the same subject, some time since in the Cork papers.

‡ See Young's Tour thro' Ireland.

yet the severer they are, the more you should be on your guard. Consider the danger to which you are exposed from the logic and eloquence of crown lawyers, the perjury of witnesses, or the prejudices of juries. I am informed, that the one who is to swear against some of you who are in gaol, is one of the greatest villains in the kingdom, and escaped the gallows some years ago.

But to return to the caution. Pray, my brethren, what right have you to curtail, to your own authority, the income of the protestant clergy? I shall not go over the same ground trodden already by the Dublin Shop-keeper, on this subject. He proves that if the tythes became the property of the laity, they would raise their rents in proportion. Or is it because, that from the earliest ages of the world, those who believed in the true God, have consecrated to him a part of the fruits of the earth, you will think it an heavier burthen to pay the same thing, because it was in conformity to the law of God, that the laws of Christian states have appointed it? You know that the rules of justice extend to all without exception, and that to use the familiar phrase, every one should have his own, whether he be Protestant or Catholic, Turk

or

or Christian: It is more your interest than you imagine, that the Protestant clergy of this country should be maintained in their rights. For many ages you have been defenceless, destitute of any protection against the power of your landlords, your clergy liable to transportation or death. The mild and tolerating spirit of the clergy of the established religion has been the only substitute for all other resources. They trained up from their early days the Protestant nobility and gentry in the principles of morality and virtue. If they preached against purgatory, they enforced charity. If they denied the real presence, they took special care to inform their flock, that whoever does injustice to any one either in his property or reputation, is unworthy to approach the communion. If they denied that the Pope is head of the church, they taught their congregation, that no man is to be injured on account of his religion, and that christianity knows no enemy. As by nature we are prone to vice of every kind, and that the earliest impressions are the strongest, had it not been for those principles which they instilled into the minds of their hearers, long before now your landed men in this country would have treated you as Turks, who think it no scruple to violate the beds of the Jew, and warn the husbands, that if they come into
their

their houses whilst they are doing them this injustice, they will cut off their heads.

Is it then to gentlemen of this description, the children of the first families in the kingdom, the instructors of the most powerful part of the community, the most moral and edifying amongst them, the most charitable and humane, that a handful of poor men are to prescribe laws, tending to diminish the support of their offspring, destined to fill one day the most important offices in the state. What! a Rev. Archdeacon Corker, a Rev. Archdeacon Tisdal, a Rev. Mr. Chetwood, a Rev. Mr. Weekes, a Rev. Mr. Meade, a Rev. Mr. Kenny, who spent his time and fortune amongst you, relieving your wants, and changing part of his house into an apothecary's shop to supply you with medicines, which yourselves could not purchase, must from an apprehension of violence, quit his house, at the threshold of which appeared so many Lazarus's with their sores not licked by his dogs, but fomented or bathed with his own hands; not desiring to be fed with the crumbs that fell from his table, but replenished to satiety with his own fare! Many more of these gentlemen could I mention, and I ask yourselves, whether you would benefit the more by having
 their

their property curtailed? still I know that you
 are oppressed and impoverished, more than any
 set of the lower classes of people on earth.
 And by that notice you have posted up, it ap-
 pears that it is far from your thoughts to over-
 turn what is established by law, but to lighten
 the burthen. It is not in the tythes themselves
 that the oppression lies, but in the manner of
 raising their value, and collecting them. The
 established clergy themselves, whose dignity
 and functions do not permit them to take on
 themselves the disagreeable office; and who,
 on the other hand, if they took your notes, which
 perhaps you would be unwilling or unable to
 pay, when they would become due, would feel
 too much in being obliged to sue a set of poor
 people in a court of justice. The established
 clergy themselves, I say, are perplexed. They
 are not inclined to oppress you, on one hand,
 and none can expect that they will part with
 their rights, on the other. And as for your
 parts, you cannot be judges in your own cause.
 The supreme power of the state alone is compe-
 tent to determine the mode of redress, which is
 too intricate a matter for me to determine. It
 is doubtless the interest of your landlords not to
 have wretched and beggarly tenantry. It is, in
 like manner, their interest to support amongst
 their

their tenants a due subordination to their respective pastors. For the generality of mankind can have no other rule, but their instruction, whereby to regulate their moral conduct. The impressions of religion, and the dread of an invisible judge, the conscious witness of our actions, are stronger than the terror of human laws, which are often eluded by privacy and several other ways, and when once we shake off the authority of religion, when opportunity offers, we are ready to shake off the authority of our masters. Present a memorial of whatever grievances you suffer to your respective landlords, who, I should hope, will transmit it to their friends in Parliament. If Parliament cannot strike out a plan, you have no remedy whatever, but that patience which I before recommended to you, and which softens the afflictions of sufferers. In a word, without the interposition of the supreme power of the state, you must either bear with patience the grievances of which you complain, or suffer an ignominious death, or seek for a better situation in remote countries, where there is more encouragement, and where thousands of your Protestant fellow subjects, less oppressed than you are, have taken shelter.

As to the regulations you have made with regard to the dues of your clergy, it is a standing maxim with all states where there are several religions, and but one established by law, not to grant any legal redress for non-payment of dues, but to the clergy of the established religion, such as the clergy of the church of England here and in England ; the Lutheran clergy in Sweden ; and the Presbyterian clergy in Holland, Geneva, and elsewhere. Free toleration of religion, and the voluntary contributions of those of their own profession, are the only resources of the clergy who are not of the religion of the state. I consider it your duty, nay your interest, to support them in a decent manner according to your abilities. And this support should appear to you the less burthensome, as there is no compulsion, which in general makes the receiver disagreeable to those who give when compelled, and deprives the giver of the merit of what he contributes, when he contributes more from compulsion than from duty and charity. On this head then we can literally apply the words of St. Paul, in his second epistle to the Corinthians, chap. 9, Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give : not grudgingly, or of necessity ; for God loveth a chearful giver. Christ himself, who, in every

page of the scriptures, preaches up the renunciation of ourselves, still declares, that the labourer is worthy of his hire. And St. Paul, the patron of disinterestedness and mortification, declares, that those who serve the altar, should live by it, and that such as feed the flock, are entitled to share of the milk. It is your own interest that your pastors be maintained with decency; that in a country where gentlemen of different religions esteem the Catholic clergy more for their outward appearance and conduct than for profession, your pastors should appear with decency; and that in country parishes where even in the dead of night they are obliged to go seven or eight miles, and perhaps more, to relieve a dying person, they should have a horse, in order to be enabled to give you every assistance in the utmost expedition in these pressing moments, when (if ever) delays are the most dangerous.

Nor, my brethren, should you disregard my remarks on this subject, because I am a clergyman; you know that for the space of fifteen years, since my arrival in this country, weddings and baptisms are quite out of my line, yet I never ceased to exhort and instruct you to the utmost of my ability.

Far be it from me to oppose (were it even in my power) the redress of your grievances. But I repeat it, by your manner of redressing them, the remedy is worse than the disorder. I would rather pay my tythes, let them be ever so oppressive, than to put my neck in the halter, by disturbing the peace of society, and violating the laws of the realm, let them be ever so severe. No rulers on earth will permit any order of men to overturn established law, by private authority. They will listen to the grievances of the subject, but they will reserve to themselves the mode of redress. They can never make the people happy, but by keeping them subject to authority, and by making this subjection as easy and reconcileable to them as the exigencies of the state will permit. The multitude is too fickle and inconstant for governing itself. It cannot be happy without subordination to order and authority. If it once strikes out of the path of obedience to the laws, there is an end of government. Troubles, dissention, civil wars, and impunity for the most atrocious crimes, must be the result. And in this state of convulsion, the man who complained of grievances before, under the ruling powers, will feel heavier grievances from his neighbour, who un-

restrained by law, will become his murderer or oppressor. If we were prisoners of war in an enemy's country, we are bound by the laws of God and nations to behave in a peaceable manner, much more so when we form members of the same society, governed by the same sovereign, and the same laws.

But what surprizes me most, with regard to the notice you have posted up, whereby you caution each parishioner not to give *but so much for tythes, and so much to the Roman Catholic Clergy*, is, that you bind yourselves by oath to abide by this regulation. Had you entered into a resolution not to pay but four shillings tythes for every acre of potatoes, &c. a court of justice would determine whether you were right or wrong. And in case you were cast at law, as in all appearance you would be, the payment of the tythes, and the costs of the suit, would be the only disadvantage you would labour under. But here, by an oath you fall into a double snare: You perplex and entangle your consciences on one hand, and on the other, you put yourselves in the power of the law.

Upon a former occasion I explained to you the nature of oaths, and the horror of perjury.

And

And although you have not perjured yourselves in swearing to your own resolutions, as it was not to a lie you swore, yet permit me to tell you, that your oath was rash, and so far a profanation of the most sacred name of God. It is with the greatest reluctance a man should swear at all, even in a just cause, and from conviction. We read in some Jewish authors, that the awful name of the Divinity was uttered by the High Priest, at the solemn benediction, after purifying himself, and washing his hands in the blood of the victim that was offered up, before he entered the sanctuary. The veneration also of the Heathens for their false Gods, was such, that in the beginning no oaths were customary, from a reverence to the Deity. Princes ratified the most solemn treaties by joining hands. And in the ages of heroism, the warrior thought himself sufficiently engaged to his General by looking at the military standard, erected upon an eminence, with an image of the tutelary God painted in the banners. Such was the veneration of all nations for the awful name of the Deity, and the sanctity of that maxim of holy writ, that we are *not to trifle with holy things*. Compare your conduct with that of the primitive inhabitants of the world, you who should be struck with a greater awe as having a more perfect

perfect knowledge of the true God, and yet make it a part of your Sunday's devotion to hand the book to each other, in order to swear to what must be destructive to yourselves, and injurious to the rights of others,—*you will swear to the Lord your God, says the Scripture, in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness, or justice.* It is not sufficient for the lawfulness of an oath, that whatever we swear be *true*. It requires moreover, that the oath be attended with *judgment*, that is to say, that the object of it be not rash; there must be necessity and prudence. There must be also *justice*, otherwise the name of God is profaned, and the oath is not binding. When Herod swore that he would give his daughter whatever she would ask him, he was guilty of murder in giving her the head of John the Baptist, and of profanation in calling on God as the witness and sanction of his cruelty.—You swear that you will pay but *four shillings for an acre of potatoes, &c.*

When St. Augustine lays down as a maxim, that the laws of every State regulate the property of the subject, and that whatever we possess must be in consequence of the determination of the law; when St. Paul commands us to pay honour to whom honour, and tribute to whom

whom tribute is due, can the most learned Casuist determine, that you are bound to pay no more than the precise sum of four shillings for an acre? Your oath then is the same thing as if you swore in the following manner:—*I swear by this book, that I will do such a thing whether it be right or wrong.* Is such an oath just? In like manner let me suppose, that after this oath, you may be sued at law for the tythes, and for non-payment be cast into prison, or have your little property distrained. What will be the consequence? You must either break your oath or remain in prison, or have your poor families ruined. Thus your oath is the same as if it were as follows:—*I swear by this book, that I will either break this oath, or rot in prison, or ruin my family.* Is there judgment, is there prudence in this? Add to this, that such persons as tender such oaths are in the power of the law, and will be treated with the utmost rigour. And on this occasion, I conjure the gentlemen of this county who may read this letter, and be next assizes on your jury, to distinguish the *wanton* compellers of such oaths, and the persons who take or administer them from fear and compulsion. I say, *take or administer*; for, *take and administer*, in the sense I allude to, are synonymous in the eyes of humanity and justice, when the motive, I mean fear of grievous

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ous outrage to their persons or property, compels them to take the oath, or administer it to others. And when I make this request, you see my brethren, how much I have your interest at heart, and with what sincerity I wish to prevent the effusion of your blood.

The same motives induced a protestant gentleman, an acquaintance of mine, to address six letters to you, in a stile adapted to your understanding, under the signature of *A Dublin Shop-keeper*. He had no motive whatever but your welfare, as his property is not in the country. His humanity and benevolence alone induced him to point out the danger to which you were exposed, the imaginary and groundless prospects you figured to yourselves, and which you will soon see vanish as smoke, the various delusions to which the unthinking multitude are liable to fall victims, and the caution you should take against those misfortunes in which a conduct similar to your's has involved so many others, several of whom were really innocent. To deprive his letters of the effect they should have on you, you were made to believe they were written by some clergyman, interested in the preservation of his tythes, or, if a Roman Catholic, in the collection of his dues. I declare
upon

upon my conscience, that they were written by a Protestant layman, and that I myself did not know the author, until after the publication of the first letter. They deserve your attention more as they come from such a disinterested hand, and as I am equally unconcerned in these matters, only as far as they regard your own safety, and the peace of the public.

I hope that *this* address will deserve your attention, as it gives the sanction of religion to the maxims of prudence, laid down in that gentleman's writings. I am confident that many of you have been misled by your ignorance of the laws, and that as these disturbances originated in the dues of the clergy, you did not foresee the consequences to yourselves. That gentleman's letters deserve your most serious attention, as he explains all the laws which hang over you. On the other hand, it is a standing maxim, that it is better to prevent crimes than to punish them. It would be an act of humanity in the Associations, composed of Noblemen and Gentlemen, for the suppression of tumults in the county of Cork, to get numbers of that gentleman's letters dispersed gratis through the country. It is the
D opinion

opinion of a great and humane writer*, that *every member of society should know when he is criminal, and when innocent.* This cannot be done without a knowledge of the law which affects the lives and liberties of the subjects. This knowledge is never sufficiently communicated in this kindom to the multitude at large, few of whom can purchase the ordinary vehicles of information, the acts; and even news-papers are prohibited from inserting *abstracts* under the penalty of a prosecution from the King's printer. In foreign countries when new laws, affecting the lives of the people, are enacted, they are posted upon the gates of the churches in all the parishes, and their non-promulgation is pleaded in justification of the fact. This before-mentioned conduct corresponds with Beccaria's wishes, who says, that every citizen should have the code of laws which affect his life; and that the conduct of Censors and Magistrates, who punish the ignorant, is a *kind of tyranny which surrounds the confines of political liberty.* If the laws are made for the people, the people should know them, and laws which affect the lives of the multitude, should not be confined to the lawyers library. I am

* Beccaria.

confident that not one out of ten thousand of the country people knows one clause of the *White Boy Act*. This is the time to make it as public as possible in a county hitherto the most peaceable in the kingdom. But to return from this digression to you, my brethren, if you have any room to complain of the extortions of any of your clergy, why have you not made application to your Bishops, previous to those tumultuary meetings? Would Lord Dunboyne, as distinguished for his tenderness, his charity, the sweetness and amiableness of his manners, as he is by his high birth and exalted station; or would the pious and edifying Doctor M'Kenna, permit the oppression of the poor under pretence of religion? They, who are more inclined to relieve your wants than to add to them?

There is some exaggeration in your written notice, insinuating that your Pastors require more than you can afford, and that some of them are more attentive to your substance than to your souls. Sure, my brethren, a Roman Catholic Clergyman, who, in times of persecution, would be bound not to abandon you, but to share your sufferings, and undergo every hardship for the sake of your salvation; bound to appear as
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the public deputy of the people, at the foot of the altar, erected to a God who died naked on the Cross, and to wean your affections from the perishable goods and fleeting pleasures of this short and distracted life, to fix them on Heavenly goods. Sure, no Roman Catholic Clergyman would make a traffic of the Sacrament, in extorting from an unhappy object, who has but fourpence a day, to support a wife and a number of children, with a handful of vegetables and a draught of water. We are rather bound to sell the sacred vases of the Temple, if we had any to dispose of, sooner than slay the victim, already fleeced by oppressive and rack-rents. It cannot be conceived that a Roman Catholic Clergyman, who pays the least regard whatever to the decency and dignity of his sacred character, would sit down in a barn or cabin, at the expence of the labouring man, and by intemperance, efface in the evening those impressions of piety which he imparted to him in the morning.—No, there is no such thing. But there is the mistake you have made in the oath already mentioned. You have bound by oath the opulent farmer, who is able and willing to give to your pastors wherewithall to support them, and to afford yourselves some assistance in your wants.—You have bound him
in

in like manner not give any more than a Crown,
 &c. and this is an injustice under the solemnity of
 an oath. For, whatever a poor man may do
 with a trifle competent to support himself, he
 has no right to controul the pockets of, or to
 prescribe laws to the rich. If there had been
 scandalous extortions of the kind, you would
 have preferred complaints to the Bishops, and
 these venerable prelates would have ordered
 their Clergy to cry out from their altars, with
 the Prophet Jonas, *if it be on my account that this
 storm is raised, throw me over-board.*

The oppression of the poor, and the love of so-
 lid gain, are inconsistent with the character
 of persons whose ministry is the condemnation
 of avarice, the contempt of riches, and the re-
 commendation of charity. They are not disposed
 to bruise the reed already broken, nor to change
 the tender and inviting voice of fathers and pas-
 tors into the harsh language of griping tax-ga-
 therers. Has not Mr. O'Kelly, have not others
 declared from the altars, that they require no
 more from you, than what you are willing to
 give? Let not then the sacred ministry be a pre-
 text for the public disturbances, which in the
 end must prove destructive to yourselves. Let
 your

your grievances be redressed by the wisdom and
humanity of your superiors in Church and State.
Let public tranquillity be restored, and let your-
selves enjoy the fruits and sweets of a peaceable
conduct and innocent conscience, which alone
can recommend you to, and procure you the pro-
tection of God and your rulers.—No person
can wish you every happiness more than

Your affectionate servant,

Cork, Feb. 21, 1786.

A. O'LEARY,



